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OLC 78-3674
14 December 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: 14 December White House Meeting on SALT ☐

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1. Frederick P. Hitz, Legislative Counsel, and I attended a meeting called by Bob Beckel, White House Congressional Liaison staff, regarding the projected SALT ratification efforts in the Senate. Also attending the meeting were: ☐

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Dan Tate	White House Congressional Staff
Doug Bennet	Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations
Kathy Smith	Department of State Office of Congressional Relations
Phil Shrag	ACTA
Jack L. Stempler	Assistant to the Secretary for Legislative Affairs
Bill Smith	Assistant for Congressional Relations for the Vice President

2. Beckel opened the meeting by referring to a 10 December article in the Chicago Sun Times revealing the White House SALT vote count which was distributed at our last meeting. Beckel made clear there is no White House count at this early date, that the list distributed was simply a compilation of Department inputs. He indicated the White House was already under attack for this count; specifically Senator-elect Baucus called the White House to indicate they were crazy if they had him in the solidly pro-SALT camp as the count indicated. ☐

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3. Beckel indicated that it had been decided that Hamilton Jordan, Assistant to the President, will run the White House effort at SALT ratification. ☐

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4. Considerable alarm was expressed by those attending the meeting that the initiative was completely with SALT opponents and that the Administration must move quickly to capture the offensive. Bennet distributed copies of a State Department pro-SALT pamphlet which is being distributed publicly. Bennet suggested that even without full agreement on a treaty, the Administration must go public on the provisions that have been agreed to. Beckel and Tate agreed to this approach. State representatives had agreed to draft approximately ☐

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25X1 12 points which will be the core of the pro-SALT effort. These were to be submitted to the SCC meeting scheduled for 18 December on SALT issues. An attempt will be made to obtain approval on these points from the SCC for the public relations offensive. []

5. A good bit of the discussion centered on tactics for notifying and briefing Members of the progress of the treaty and an announcement of the formal agreement when it is reached. An attempt will be made by Administration spokesmen to brief as many Senators as possible, including some in their home states, if necessary, prior to the Members' return to Washington for the 96th Congress. This is contingent upon Secretary Vance and Foreign Minister Gromyko reaching agreement in Geneva next week. Bennet also suggested that telegrams be sent to the Members upon agreement between Vance and Gromyko. State will draft the telegrams. []

6. Mr. Hitz and I were basically observers to the meeting as little of this session centered on SALT verification issues. (U)

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Assistant Legislative Counsel

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